

the aggressors. The complexity of advancing civilisation changes the form, but the essence is always the same.

Everyone who has studied the political literature of Germany is familiar with this argument: the population of Germany is growing, the tariffs of other nations impoverish her, the world is parcelled out and colonised by other powers, and Germany needs space for expansion, she must get it, if need be by force. Everyone knows, too, how Russia has desired an outlet to the oceans uncontrolled by other powers, and Austria a greater seaboard on the Adriatic. All these are but examples of the motives that influenced the ancient world.

Economic oppression, the impoverishment of the masses and the enrichment of the few, have produced an over-mastering appetite for fresh opportunities—a land hunger which it has seemed could only be satisfied at the expense of other peoples. And if the theory be true that this land hunger can only be satisfied by appropriation, there opens out to the world a tragic prospect of war and violence. But the theory is not true; there are the best of reasons for holding it to be utterly false; and in any case no one has the right to deem it true until the nations have taken steps to secure for each toiler his share of the national heritage. It is in internal reform that the ultimate hope of world peace lies, not in Hague Conferences and International Treaties.

How little does the average voter know of home politics, ground as he is in the unceasing round of earning a meagre pittance barely enough to support life in decency, and how much less can he be expected to understand foreign politics. Politically free and educated democracies will never sacrifice their own freedom nor aggress on that of others, but democratic government requires more of economic freedom than any people yet has. Yet economic freedom is something worth striving for, however distant it may seem, for in it is the hope of the world.

The political struggles of the past have not been unavailing, for they have brought a large measure of personal freedom and enlightenment. Liberty of discussion and political power is now recognised as the right of every man. But this advance has but served to bring into stronger light the necessity for liberation from economic enslavement. In this country the grosser forms of that have disappeared: the King no longer grants monopolies to his favourites, and exchange is no longer hindered by a multitude of taxes and restrictions. Yet these and other reforms have but touched the fringes of the problem, though they have shown the direction in which the real solution must lie. The Free Trade movement, the Factory Acts, the Small Holdings Acts, and all the other measures advocated and carried by the reform movement, have by their failure to solve the major problem afforded a negative proof that economic freedom cannot be attained by any measure except one that will free the land. William Ogilvie, Adam Smith, Thomas Spence, Thomas Paine, Patrick Edward Dove and others brought forward positive proof that the land question was the fundamental one. Finally came Henry George to prove it by the closest reasoning and by a wealth of illustration, and to give direction to the reform movement of the future by working out the solution of the problem into a definite and simple plan.

The diffusion of Henry George's ideas by himself and his followers has now resulted in a strong political

movement and the formation of a Parliamentary Group, pledged to the carrying out of a large instalment of his plan. The reformers of other times, even those who saw most clearly that land reform was the fundamental reform, must often have been filled with despondency, for the only methods of reform they knew were arbitrary and inadequate. But the reformers of our time should be full of hope, for the solution of the problem has been worked out in all the detail necessary to begin putting it into operation to-morrow. All that now remains is to spread still further the knowledge of these principles and plans among the people, and bring more pressure to bear upon their legislators. When that has been done, as it soon may be, we may begin to enter the promised land.

F. C. R. D.

## THE SOCIAL PROBLEM SOLVED

By Grace I. Colbron

When you go to the box office of the theatre the attendant or his manager does not ask you how much money you have, does not look to see if you wear fine clothes, nor does he ask what your occupation is. You tell him you want a certain seat in a certain section, and if it is not already disposed of you get it by paying for just what you ask for. And you are getting value for your money by securing just what you pay for.

It would not be reasonable to say to the man in the box office: "I'll take these seats, but if I do not use them I should like to have a reduction in price." You would speedily learn that the management of the theatre could not do this. His business is not conducted on that plan.

### NO RIGHT TO MONOPOLISE LAND

The management of a hotel is conducted on the same principle. You pay for a room, you receive your key, but you could not consistently say to the clerk when you go out: "Now, I'll not pay for this room if I don't happen to need it." That room belongs to the hotel system through which a legitimate earning accrues, just the same as the seat in a theatre. If you pay for it, it is your own concern whether you occupy your possession or not, but you have no right to ask a reduction when some one other than yourself could utilise this space at the rate which you yourself do not want to pay because you do not happen to occupy it. It is the same with land values. No one has a right to monopolise land and be exempt from commensurate taxation because he does not happen to be occupying it.

Single Tax is public housekeeping reduced to a proper science, a science that teaches us how to become useful to our fellow members of society. Since man-made laws have built a fence around raw material, the worker must ask of a few of his fellows permission to live, must beg almost for a livelihood. The man who labours and earns his bread in the sweat of his face in fulfilment of the mandate that went out when he fell from grace now gets only half a loaf.

### LABOUR BEGS FOR ITS OWN

Labour is no farther advanced to-day with all its appurtenances and mechanical devices, augmented by modern science, than it was in the years that have gone by. Labour itself still stands and begs for that which is rightfully its own.

We send out nurses and doctors and ambulances and hospital corps to cure the wounded on the fields of battle, but we do not stop to consider how much simpler

and easier the solution is to it all by preventing warfare in the beginning. And what we do on the bloody fields of battle we repeat in our industrial fields, for we view the economic wrecks in the same manner that we treat the ills of war. Society cannot retrograde. Water cannot run uphill unless it is pumped up. The natural course of the human race is onward and upward, but our poverty in fifty years has been greater than we have had in 500 years. We can rise to fight chattel slavery, but our industrial slavery to-day is greater than chattel slavery ever was. Because of its utter impersonality it is a greater menace and is a breeder of more evil.

#### CORNERING THE EARTH

In New York there is one-fourth of an acre of land on which there is built a great department store. The real owner of that land through a lease which obtains with the tenant-owner of the building receives an annuity of \$120,000 without the investment of a single cent. He is being magnificently pensioned through the industrial value increase toward which he has contributed nothing. He is thus reaping where he has not sown, and gathering where some one else has strewn. No investment in chattel slavery ever brought such returns.

#### FOLLOW NATURAL LAWS

The natural law of wages will always be regulated by what a man can make for himself with the raw materials he has at hand. He will not, for a monetary consideration, work for someone else for less than he can make by working for himself. Whether it be farm or factory, the job can be made to seek out the man rather than the monotonous tramp for work which now prevails, and the individual may be privileged to select by choice rather than necessity as to what he shall accomplish.

No man can be a free agent when all of the natural resources are monopolised, and wherever we find this we find wages sinking to the lowest ebb. It is true, wages have been increasing in recent years, but with their increase came a corresponding rise in the cost of the necessities of life. So the wage-earner is no farther ahead than he was before.

But the whole system of the taxation of land and improvements is wrong. For every material sum that the manufacturer invests in machinery and improvements in his factories we exact a corresponding toll in taxes. Thus we fine him for proving a benefactor, for providing means through which others may earn food and clothing and necessities of life.

If we pause to ask why our industries are taxed, the reply will come back to us: "We need the money!"

So will the burglar say if we inquire his motives when we find him rifling our purses. He needs the money; but does the excuse justify us in allowing the burglar to take it? Burglary is a good profession, he might say, but we should feel inclined to believe that it is mighty poor policy.

We cannot expect otherwise than that graft and corruption will characterise the spending of public money when these elements are exercised in collecting such revenue. The man who makes money dishonestly rarely exercises good judgment in spending it, I find, for that is a saying that was taught me in my youth, and I have observed closely to find it verified.

Every community has its own natural wage, and money grows faster than the community's needs. When this is stolen, the community may be likened to the man who is returning home from work with his pay envelope in his pocket and permits another to reach therein and take it away from him. He is reduced to beggary or charity, like the community that suffers its natural wage to be confiscated.

## THE RELATION OF LAND VALUE TO COMPOSITE VALUE

### Its Influence in Determining the Proportion of Taxation when Land Values Alone are Taxed

The comprehensive statistics of the valuation of land and improvements in New York enable a comparison to be made between the incidence of taxes upon land, buildings and personal property with the incidence of taxes on land alone. The following calculations will show that the revenue from a substituted land-value tax payable on any separate district or individual property will be more or less than the present tax revenues in proportion as the ratio of the land value to the composite value of that district or property is more or less than the average ratio of the land value to the composite value over the whole city.

In New York the rates of the municipal taxes vary as among the various Boroughs comprising the city. As it is proposed to make calculations on the basis of an equalised land-value tax operative over the whole of the city, it is necessary to compare with it, not the differential Borough rates, but the rate of the combined property tax which would exist if that were also equalised.

#### THE PRESENT TAX AND THE LAND-VALUE TAX

Annual revenue required	\$150,503,897
Present taxable value (land, improvements and personal property)	\$8,390,155,000
Required rate of tax for the whole city, supposing the differential Borough rates to be equalised*	1.794 per cent.
Taxable value when the basis is land value only, including the land value attributable to special franchises and real estate of corporations	\$4,967,545,000
Rate of land-value tax required to raise \$150,503,897	3.029 per cent.
The transference of the personal property tax (\$6,083,311) to land values is equivalent to a land-value tax of	0.122 per cent.
Land-value tax if personal property tax remained	2.907 per cent.
Average ratio of the land value to the composite value in Greater New York	61.7 per cent.

#### THE RESULT OF THE CHANGE

(A) In "Section 1" of Manhattan where the ratio of the land value to the composite value is 69.0† per cent., i.e., more than the average ratio (61.7 per cent.) over the whole city.

Value of land and improvements	\$796,284,000
Produce of tax at 1.794 per cent.	\$14,285,337
Value of land alone	\$550,259,950
Produce of tax at 2.907 per cent.	\$15,996,057
Increase due to change which is an increase of	12.0 per cent.
The land-value ratio in "Section 3" of Manhattan (69.0 per cent.) exceeds the average land-value ratio for the whole city by	12.0 per cent.

(B) In "Section 5" of Brooklyn, where the ratio of the land value to the composite value is 41.7 per cent., i.e., less than the average ratio (61.7 per cent.) over the whole city.

Value of land and improvements	\$86,299,325
Produce of tax at 1.794 per cent.	\$1,548,214
Value of land alone	\$36,054,290

\* The present rates are Manhattan 1.78, The Bronx 1.77, Brooklyn 1.84, Queens, 1.80, Richmond 1.90.

† The Tax Commissioners' Report gives the ratio as 69.3 which is evidently a misprint.